

APPENDIX H

STATE AND REGIONAL PROJECT REVIEW/PRIORITY RANKING SYSTEM

As part of its policy to decentralize decision-making in the prioritization of applications for the Small Cities Community Development Block Grant Program, the state has delegated project selection to the Association of Governments (AOG's) through the Regional Review Commissions (RRC's). Each RRC has established a rating and ranking system that will be used in screening projects for funding. The state has approved these systems and public hearings have been held for input.

The state requires that these systems contain at least **eight** basic criteria. This requirement has been instituted to bring some consistency to the ranking of applications statewide. These criteria may not necessarily be addressed at the local level, but they are supported by federal statute and require compliance. The RRC's are not required to use the identical language shown in addressing these criteria, but they must meet the general intent.

1. Capacity of Grantee to Carry Out the Grant

The grantee must have a history of successful grant administration in order to receive full credit in this category. Grantees whose performance in the past was poor must show improved administration capability through third party administration contracts with AOG's or other capable entities to get partial credit. **In order to be eligible to receive new funding, a grantee/sub-grantee must have drawn down at least 50 percent of their prior year's CDBG grant funds at the time of regional rating and ranking.**

2. Job Creation

Credit must be given to projects that create or retain jobs. Fewer points may be given for temporary jobs.

3. Improvements or Expansion of Housing Stock

Because housing is a state priority, it is required that housing projects be weighted or receive additional credit in rating and ranking systems.

4. Compliance with House Bill 295

House Bill 295 requires all cities and counties to address the problems associated with the availability of affordable housing in their communities. Applications received from communities and counties who have complied with HB 295 by the preparation and adoption of a plan, and who are applying for a project that is intended to address some element of that plan will be given additional consideration.

5. Extent of Poverty

It is required that credit be given for the percent of "very low income" and "extremely low income" persons benefiting either from the project or as evidenced within the jurisdiction as a whole. Very low-income persons are members of families who receive 50 percent of the county

or statewide median income per year. Extremely low-income families are those that receive 30% of the county or statewide median income per year.

6. Financial Commitment to Community Development

Because of the difficulty comparing all of the various ways a commitment to community development can be measured, the state will only require that additional credit be given to communities who show commitment based on criteria selected by the RRC.

7. Project Maturity

Each pre-application must contain a specific, detailed scope of work, detailed to the extent that the planning and financial criteria needed to determine a projects' "immediate viability" could be evaluated. These criteria may be somewhat subjective and may be weighted in accordance with local priority. In the presentation phase of the rating and ranking process questions should be asked which will allow the RRC to determine how well thought-out the project is at that point in the process. The scope of work should contain a narrative description of the project and a detailed engineer's cost estimate. Less detailed projects should not be penalized as they relate to more complex projects. All funding sources should be in place or for a lesser number of points, the applicant should know where the additional funding is coming from and applications for the funding should have been submitted or be in the process of preparation for submittal. For additional points engineering services will have been previously procured. The project manager will have been assigned and has played a major role in the preparation of the application.

8. Successful participation in either the 21st Century Communities Program or the Quality Growth Communities Program

A community, regardless of size, must efficiently perform many and varied functions in behalf of its citizens. Communities that demonstrate their desire to improve through the use of these programs will be able to increase the use and efficiency of scarce public funds. Therefore they will receive additional credit in the rating of their applications.

Communities with less than 1,000 persons who are applying for a project consistent with the regional consolidated plan (CIP) will be given full credit in this criteria. If they do participate in the 21st Century program they will get additional credit not available to larger communities.

The state of Utah emphasizes the importance of incorporating quality growth principals in the planning and operation of city government. In the rating and ranking of CDBG applications each region will recognize applicants accomplishments consistent with these principals by adding additional points weighted in a manner that they deem reasonable, as approved by the state when incorporating the following:

1. Demonstration of local responsibility for planning and land-use in their communities in coordination and cooperation with other governments.
2. Efficient infrastructure development including water and energy conservation methods.
3. Housing opportunity and affordability has been incorporated into community planning.
4. The community incorporates protection and conservation of water, air, critical lands, important agricultural lands and historic resources.